



**PUBLIC WORKS & FACILITIES COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
WEDNESDAY April 13, 2022
TIME: 6:30 P.M.
Via WebEX.com
MIDDLETOWN CONNECTICUT**

Members Present: Councilman Gene Nocera
Councilman Darnell Ford
Councilman Ed McKeon

Staff Present: Christopher M. Holden, P.E., Acting Director of Public Works
Rohan Manning, Acting Deputy Director of Public Works
Kim O'Rourke, Recycling Program Coordinator

Others Present: Deborah Kleckowski, Chairwoman, So. Fire, Board of Fire Commissioners
Steve Fraysier, Nick Giardina & David Cicia of BL Companies

Public: Chris Bevans, Angelo Bonamico, Joe Carta, Bill Cotter, Bob Daniels, Sheila Daniels, John Hall (Executive Director of The Jonah Center For Earth & Art), S. Lagana, Alicia Penney, Dan Penney, Ashwin Purohit, David Sandler, Sal (no last name), Call-In User 3

PUBLIC HEARING – LYCEUM ROAD CLOSURE SPEAKERS:

Deborah Kleckowski, Chairwoman, So. Fire, Board of Fire Commissioners, 197 Coleman Road: A letter dated March 25, 2022 was sent to the PW & Facilities Commission, opposing the closure of Lyceum Road. Members of the public approached the Board of Fire Commissioners about the abrupt closing of the road. The South Fire District, Board of Fire Commissioners, officially requests that the road be opened as soon as possible, understanding that the road needs work.

Bob Daniels, 896 Millbrook Road: Mr. Daniels thanked the Commission members for the opportunity to speak, acknowledging how proactive everyone has been. He also thanked the members for listening to the public. If the potholes can be filled, and some of the drainage dug out, as is usually done each year, that would allow for time to look at other costs.

David Sandler, 460 Chamberlain Road: Questioned about making it a limited liability road. Christopher Holden will check with the Office of the General Counsel.

Dan Penney & Alicia Penney, 1101 Chamberlain Hill Road: Mr. Penney clarified that he is speaking as a registered voter, even though he serves on the South Fire, Board of Fire Commissioners. He would like copies of the correspondence that is listed on the Agenda. Under new business, number 5, he questioned who is responsible for dams in town. Also, are the inspections done in accordance with the State requirements of the Dam Bureau, and if so, who does the inspections and who is responsible? Are there any plans to review the dam on Sumner Brook? What is the plan, and time frame, for Lyceum



Road. Christopher Holden responded that it depends on who owns the dam. Yes, dams are inspected and that is generally done by a consultant.

Bill Cotter, 472 Millbrook Road: He resides on the corner of Millbrook Road and Wilcox Road. He has already seen an increase in traffic on Wilcox Road. Also, when walking Lyceum Road he has witnessed trucks attempting to use the road. He is in favor of installing a gravel road, or something of that nature.

Joe Carta: He is opposed to closing the road. He believes the cost for a walkway/parkway is excessive. He concurs that since being repaved, the road has been in good condition for many years, until just the last few. He stated that the high water table can be a contributing factor. He also agrees that the traffic on Wilcox Road, a neighborhood road, is going to increase. He supports leaving the road open for safety reasons. Creating a park like setting will require parking lots on both ends, there can potentially be garbage left, it will take away a spot where youth fish. Mr. Carta also spoke regarding proposed plans for Pameacha Pond. He is not in agreement with turning it into a stream or park. He inquired about information being posted to the website, as the Wetlands Commission posts plans for things that will be on their agenda. He suggested considering posting more information before future meetings.

John Hall, resident of Portland, Executive Director of The Jonah Center For Earth & Art: Previously voiced his opinion in favor of closing Lyceum Road. Sharing many examples of the huge destructive impact of human beings on the environment, he saw the closing of the road as an opportunity to start to say no to some of the human impact. He is looking to give space to other forms of life.

Chris Bevans, 730 Millbrook Road: His property abuts the corner of Lyceum Road. He is in favor of keeping the road closed. He opposes a gravel road, due to maintenance, dust and silt runoff. He would like some type of speed abatement in place, if road remains open. When Wilcox Road was closed a lot of traffic used Lyceum Road. Possibly having both roads open would keep the traffic balanced. Keeping swales on sides of road open and maintained is important. He has seen less garbage since the road has been closed.

Bob Daniels, 896 Millbrook Road: Addressing John Hall's great points. He serves on the City Conservation and Agriculture Committee, and is the Chair of the Agriculture Committee. He agrees that we all hurt our environment. However, large areas of open space have been, and continue to be purchased. Monitoring what Eversource is doing with power lines continues. Farming has changed drastically from what was happening in the past. Very few dairy cows and corn fields remain. The use of sprays on corn fields has stopped. People are using proper management on property, and land, from a farming perspective. The wildlife has increased in the area. A quarter mile of road is not going to make a big difference in the environment. From an agricultural perspective, the road should remain open. Also, from a safety standpoint, due to storms. He stated that the Commissioners and Fire Chief of South Fire District agree that the road should remain open. There are Eversource and Frontier lines along the road. With the road needing to be open for utilities, he'd like to see it fixed up and kept as is.

Dan Penney, 1101 Chamberlain Hill Road: Appreciates John Hall's comments relative to the human impact. His points are well taken and important. With concerns for health and safety, he believes that the road should remain open for emergency response vehicles. Also, that it's critical the road be reopened as soon as possible. Recently Durham assisted with a structure fire, assisting South Fire



District. The vehicle(s) had to bypass Lyceum Road and go around the extra mile and half to return to Durham. A minute of time, in life safety, is a life.

Gene Nocera: at this point discussion does not normally take place in public comment.

Storm water and ground water is high in the State. This has been occurring for about ten years. His opinion is that this is part of the issue here. The Water Pollution Control Authority is currently being sued, because City sewer systems are designed to release storm water and waste water, when there is an overflow, into the Connecticut River. This is what is currently happening, a lot more than ever before. This is being worked on aggressively. There is a basin in South Farms that is at the top of the list, including the waste water pumping station that fails. There is more runoff now than ever before. The dams are also being worked on. It's not a simple solution, it is multifaceted. Personally speaking as one member of the Commission, he will discuss opening up the road temporarily while a solution is determined, and a decision is made about what to do in the future. The road is not on a road bond, and to bring it to State standard the cost is \$750,000.00. There are a lot of issues that surround this issue of Lyceum Road that the City is aggressively working on right now. It is very complex, but they will discuss temporarily opening the road back up. The necessary paving or patching could be done while it is being determined what the best option is for the future.

The meeting was called to order by Councilman Nocera at 7:17 p.m., upon arrival of Councilman Darnell Ford. Councilman McKeon moved to approve the Meeting Minutes dated March 9, 2022. The motion was seconded by Councilman Darnell Ford. Motion passed unanimously.

Councilman McKeon moved to amend the Agenda to add new business items CASHO and Energy Grant Application. The motion was seconded by Councilman Darnell Ford. Motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARING – LYCEUM ROAD CLOSURE ADDITIONAL SPEAKERS:

Angelo Bonamico, Jr., 331 Chauncey Road: Questioned the cost to pave the road.

Sheila Daniels, 896 Millbrook Road: In favor of the road being open. Her concerns are around emergencies. Is there something else that can be focused on other than closing this quarter mile of road, causing upset and potentially putting some residents in danger. She stated there are means and ways to fix the road that don't cost \$750,000.00. There is plenty of greenspace and wildlife. Residents would like the Commission to consider the people who live in the neighborhood and their say, over people who don't even live in Middletown.

Clarification of the purpose for public comment was provided by Councilman McKeon. The Public Hearing portion of the meeting was closed.

Correspondence was discussed. Items a. b. and c. all relate to Lyceum Road. d. is the Middlesex County Historical Society fall car show and market.

Councilman McKeon moved to change Old Business a. Lyceum Road to the next item on the agenda. Motion seconded by Councilman Darnell Ford. Motion passed unanimously.



6. Old Business

a. Lyceum Road – Christopher Holden presented three plans that were developed for what could be done with the road. One is to reconstruct the road for a cost of \$775,000.00. Two is to mill the pavement off and repave it like it is now. The cost is \$265,000.00. Three is to remove the pavement and create a walking trail. The cost is \$165,000.00. All three options require the 120' of HDPE and the creation of swales. The costs do not include permitting costs or inspection costs.

Councilman Nocera suggested that a fourth option, in terms of the cost of what it would take to make this road temporarily passable, with minor repairs be considered. This would be during exploration of funding for the options presented. Also, the Water Pollution Control Authority will be working out in that area in the next year, or sooner. Part of that engineering may include road repair. Christopher Holden would need to clarify with Director Fazzino to determine how far the limits go for the waste water sewer collection basin. Councilman Nocera stated this would be another option, which would be a bond that will be put together this November. South Farms is first on the list. Councilman Nocera questioned what the Commissioners think about having the road temporarily reopened, with repair, while the options are explored.

Councilman McKeon moved to reopen the road temporarily and to make it passable with temporary patches. Councilman Darnell Ford seconded the motion. Councilman McKeon understands points made by John Hall. He stated that South District Fire Commission has asked to keep the road open for safety reasons, and there has been a vote on it. It was his understanding that the fire department agreed, previously, to close the road. He now understands that it should be kept open for safety reasons, based on the fire department vote. Christopher Holden clarified that it was the South Fire Commissioners that said that, not the South Fire management. Based on his discussions with the Fire Chief, Deputy Fire Chief and the Fire Marshal, as far as he knew they did not see this as a significant change in service to this area. If there was a problem with one side of the road, they would go down the other side, depending upon where the response was. There is a hydrant near 529 Millbrook Road, between Lyceum Road and Wilcox Road. The stream would not need to be used as a water supply, because there is City water available. Councilman McKeon requested that with two Commissioners in attendance, would they share their interactions with the South Fire Chief, and Fire Marshal, on this topic.

Deborah Kleckowski explained that there was a conversation between the Chief, and the Acting Director, which made it seem as if it was very serious, and the road needed to be closed. The night of the meeting, Commissioner Penney, who is at this meeting as an elector, the Daniels, and several people were at the meeting when the Fire Chief spoke. The Fire Chief did speak and say that it is in the best interest to have that road open. (Commissioner Penney spoke about the life saving perspective) The two most important issues came from the Daniels, from their perspective and a farming perspective. Also from Commissioner Penney, who spoke about the life saving perspective, and he is correct. It was clear that a minute, or minute and a half, could absolutely be life altering. The reason the South District Board of Fire Commissioners voted is because they are the ones responsible for the Fire House. It is not an advisory position. Dan Penney's discussion with the Chief concerned relative response times and general use.



Councilman McKeon moved to amend the motion on the floor to look at cost, asking the Acting Director of Public Works to consider the cost, and vote on it at the next meeting. The amendment was seconded by Councilman Darnell Ford. Motion, as amended, was approved unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS:

a. Sumner Brook Watershed Study – Steve Fraysier, Professional Engineer; Nick Giardina, Director of Engineering & David Cicia, Hydraulics Engineer of BL Companies – Project Overview, Existing Conditions

Alternative 1 – Bridge Replacements at Paddock Road & Lee Street

Alternative 2 – Channel Dredging Along Sumner Brook

Alternative 3 – Full Dam Removal at Upper Mill Pond

Summary and Conclusion – All Alternatives Incorporated; All Alternatives Except Dam Removal Incorporated; Funding Options: federal local bridge program, federal local bridge program – design managed by the State, State local bridge program, LOTCIP/LOCIP options, FEMA – flood hazard mitigation program, US Fish & Wildlife, CT DEEP

Feedback from the Town and South Fire District/address some of the flooding issues in the area due to Sumner Brook. There is infrastructure damage to roads and public property which impacts emergency services. Sometimes Randolph Road (CT-155) and other City roads are not passable during flooding events. Flooding has increased over the years.

Questions: Councilman Nocera stated there are not catch basins to collect all of the water. He questioned if part of the plan is to put in a water retention system in the future. Councilman McKeon asked what effect the proposed changes would have on South Fire District needing to make arrangements for re-routing for emergency response. Steve Fraysier stated that would need to be considered if bridge replacements were done. Councilman McKeon questioned how to reduce flooding more. Steve Fraysier stated that they recommended all of the alternatives as the path forward, the best thing would be to do all of it. Councilman McKeon noted that residents have experienced issues with drainage that were obviously caused by development. The flow of water during rainstorms had not been anticipated correctly. He recommends that studies be done, prior to development, to determine where water will go. Christopher Holden reported that a road project is already in the works for Lee and Paddock. They were waiting for the results of this study to determine what bridge or culvert structure would be installed. Lee and Paddock are in the road bond. Work to increase the size of the culvert on Randolph Road would have to be coordinated with DOT.

David Cicia explained that there is a limit to what the City can do because the State has a lack of funds. For the State to replace a bridge, that's not structurally damaged, it would be extremely difficult for funds to be used for that. This is why BL Companies staff did not fully study the replacement of this bridge. DEEP would need to be involved for the dam to be removed.

b. Pameacha Pond Dam Options - Steve Fraysier, Professional Engineer; Nick Giardina, Director of Engineering & David Cicia, Hydraulics Engineer of BL Companies – Aerial Location, Project History, Concepts, Next Steps, Questions (Councilman McKeon clarified that Highland Avenue is not closest, it is actually Lakeside Avenue.) Christopher Holden reported that DEEP issued a consent order because of the combination of a sewer line within the culvert. Both Public Works and Water and Sewer were on the consent order to move forward with either a dam repair or dam removal. It was very



clear that the dam should be removed. There is an invasive species of fish, snakehead, which are in the pond and need to stay there, not getting into the Connecticut River. Grating will be installed shortly to keep the fish within the pond. The Water and Sewer Department has been working on this project for a long time. There is contamination in the parking lot. This has impacted the location of the sewer line. The soil needs to be analyzed, so if there is contaminated soil none of it gets sent downstream. A study of industries that have been in the area has also been done to determine what chemical components to test for. There is a significant flooding issue. Removal of the dam will reduce the amount of flooding which takes place upstream from this area. The sampling came back in the City's favor. Public sessions will be held. Steve Fraysier explained that a survey of the surrounding area was done. A preliminary layout has been completed for the Long Hill Brook. Concepts are developed for what could be done, once the dam is removed. Potentially could be a public park. Councilman Nocera expressed concerns about the amount of water in the area, including behind the middle school. He questions if this project will help the water situation. Steve Fraysier reviewed the next steps.

c. Resolution LoCIP – HR Office Install - Christopher Holden reported that a confidential space, within the Mayor's office, would be for the HR Specialist to work on confidential paperwork. Confidential conversations would still take place in the HR Office, or within the Office of the General Counsel. It would be a partial wall build out. Councilman McKeon moved to approve the resolution using LoCIP funds to build the HR office. The motion was seconded by Councilman Darnell Ford. Motion passed unanimously.

d. Resolution LoCIP – American Legion RTU HVAC Install – Christopher Holden reported that the unit for the Hall of Fame area needs to be replaced. Councilman McKeon moved to approve the resolution to use LoCIP funds for the HVAC installation. The motion was seconded by Councilman Darnell Ford. Motion passed unanimously.

e. Middlesex County Historical Society 36th Annual Antique Car Show/Fall Harvest Market – Proposed date of October 2, 2022, with a rain date of October 9, 2022. Councilman McKeon moved to approve the dates. The motion was seconded by Councilman Darnell Ford. Motion passed unanimously.

f. Country Club Road Soccer Complex transfer to Middletown Youth Soccer – Christopher Holden reported that the City has been working with Middletown Youth Soccer to transfer the property to them. The Department is in favor of that, as between \$75,000.00 and \$80,000.00 is spent annually to maintain the facility. The Department is willing to give the property up to Middletown Youth Soccer. The City would still be able to use the fields for the Recreation Department. In the future, if youth soccer doesn't want to use the property any longer, the City would have the right of first refusal. Also, the property always has to remain as a recreational facility. Councilman Nocera stated that it needs to be deeded that way. Councilman McKeon moved to approve the transfer. The motion was seconded by Councilman Darnell Ford. Following questions and discussion, it was decided that this item should be moved to the Common Council for discussion. The motion to move this to the Common Council passed unanimously.

g. The Connecticut Tree Protective Association – Rick Romano Dues \$55.00 – Annual dues for the Deputy Tree Warden. Councilman McKeon moved to approve payment. The motion was seconded by Councilman Darnell Ford. Motion passed unanimously.

Additional New Business:

h. CASHO (CT Association of Street and Highway Officials) - \$60.00 Registration Annual Meeting – Christopher Holden requested approval of the registration fee. Councilman McKeon moved to approve the payment. The motion was seconded by Councilman Darnell Ford. Motion passed unanimously.



i. Energy Grant Application \$350,000.00 – Christopher Holden explained that a grant was applied for that would cover any additional expenses that the City would incur for co-collection. Food waste and trash would be collected in the same container, using two different color bags. There would be an additional roll off at the recycling center. This would be for residential customers, within the sanitation district. Councilman McKeon moved to support the grant application. The motion was seconded by Councilman Darnell Ford. Motion passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS: Reported on by Christopher Holden

b. Recreation Center Update – Contractors are going strong right now. Councilman Nocera suggested having an onsite meeting.

c. Veterans Pool and Splash Pad Update – The pool bid is opening April 21, 2022.

d. Harbor Park Boardwalk Update – The only thing remaining is repair to the back corner. Determining whether a grate, instead of concrete work, will allow the water pressure to be released.

e. Multiuse Trail Update – Work continues on the archaeological dig.

f. Fencing and Scoreboard – Michael Scott should have information soon, pricing to be determined.

OTHER: Reported on by Christopher Holden

a. March 2022 Monthly Report - Highway Division – Road project work is taking place. Adding extra hours to a work day has allowed for work to be completed more efficiently.

b. March 2022 Monthly Report - Parks Division – Staff currently working hard to get all of the fields ready for use. Stone dust fields are in good condition. Clay fields need more sun to dry them out.

c. March 2022 Public Works Overtime Report – A minimal amount of overtime is being used for road project work.

d. March 2022 Building Permits – Fees received to date are higher than projected.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS: None

Councilman McKeon questioned when a permanent Director of Public Works will be selected. Christopher Holden reported that he has been in contact with Mayor Florsheim. Councilman Nocera will contact Mayor Florsheim.

Councilman Nocera requested that the cost for the potential temporary opening of Lyceum Road be shared, when available, so an online vote can be taken prior to the next meeting. Councilman Nocera thanked attendees for their input.

Adjourn – As there was no further discussion, Councilman McKeon moved to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Councilman Darnell Ford. The motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.